

**To:** Sen. Carney, Rep. Moonen, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

**From:** Tenley Skolfield, 516 Brighton Road, Solon ME 04979

**Re:** Testimony in support of LD 2007, *An Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki Nations*

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Tenley Skolfield and I live in Solon. I am a lifelong resident of Maine, a registered Maine guide, outdoors enthusiast, and I stand with the Wabanaki people and others urging the passage of LD2007. Throughout my life and with my friendships among the Wabanaki people, I have experienced their hardships; economic challenges; unwillingness among Maine government and most residents to acknowledge that we live, work and recreate on their homelands; and general disrespect of these First-Nations people.

It is long past the time Maine supports her indigenous people, respects their sovereignty as a nation, and recognizes the 22 consensus acts from the 1980 Maine Indian Land Claims Settlement Act.

I am acutely aware that outside of Maine, there's an economic boom going on in other indigenous nations. Easing the Settlement Act's restrictions will enable the Wabanaki Nations to take full advantage of federal self-determination policies that are very clearly benefiting other tribes and nearby communities across the country.

I've read the [Harvard Report](#). I attended a webinar where researchers presented the data that shows Wabanaki Nations could become the economic engines of their regions, creating new opportunities for jobs and income growth for themselves and rural Maine. According to the recent Harvard Report, self-government for the tribes would likely mean an additional \$330 million a year in Maine's Gross Domestic Product, more than 2,700 jobs, and \$39 million a year in state and local tax revenue. Based on the experience of other tribes, better than half the new jobs created are likely to be filled by neighbors of Wabanaki tribes in rural Maine. That Maine ignores this potential for economic growth shows total disrespect for Wabanaki Nation and the community we call Maine.

**Passing LD 2007 is all about fairness, equity, and economic opportunity because when the Wabanaki thrive, rural Maine thrives.**

Thank you Sen. Carney, Rep. Moonen, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary for considering my testimony on LD 2007.

Respectfully,  
Tenley Skolfield